

## Pediatric primary health care in earthquake-affected areas of Sisak-Moslavina County during the COVID-19 pandemic

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### Aim

To present the organization of pediatric primary health care in Sisak-Moslavina County in the complex conditions of lack of staff, facilities, and equipment after the earthquake during the Covid-19 pandemic.



### Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic spread to Croatia on February 25, 2020, which required a change in the organization of health care institutions and the provision of health services. In addition, on December 29, 2020, Sisak-Moslavina County was hit by a strong earthquake that destroyed most of the facilities of the health system. The pandemic and earthquake have affected adversely the physical, mental and social well-being of children and their families.

### Results

About 13000 children live in the earthquake-affected area. In 2020, 749 newborns were born in the Sisak maternity hospital.<sup>1</sup> Primary pediatric care covers 8348 children up to 14 years of age<sup>1</sup>, of which 4736 children up to 7 years of age<sup>1</sup>. Out of 4 pediatric outpatient clinics (covered by 3 pediatric teams) in Sisak caring for 5140 children<sup>1</sup>, two work in containers, and one is dislocated in the suburbs of Sisak. From Glina, the primary pediatric outpatient office caring for 1247 children<sup>1</sup> was moved to the nearest town Topusko. In the Petrinja area, two primary pediatric teams are working at the same location as before the earthquake and caring for a total of 1961 children<sup>1</sup>.

The salutogenic approach to the health of families and children was maintained in an emergency, which included breastfeeding support, continued implementation of pediatric preventive health care measures, including vaccination, care for vulnerable groups of children with disabilities and socially deprived children, and intersectoral cooperation.

Photo No 1



2



3



4



5



6



### Conclusion

It is needed to increase community awareness that delivering pediatric health care in emergencies is essential and could be realized if the appropriate number of health care teams is available. Ensuring spatial and all other conditions for their work should be the highest priority in restoration after the earthquake.

### References & Acknowledgements

1. Data from the Croatian Health Insurance Institute, Sisak Regional Office.
2. Thanks to the UNICEF Office for Croatia and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia, temporary structures (containers) and the most necessary equipment for pediatric teams were acquired. (Photos No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
3. The authors thank the primary paediatricians A. Persoglia-Petrac and J. Dragojević for the photographs. The photos (1-5) show the working conditions of the three pediatric teams in Sisak. The containers are in front of the damaged building of the Health Center. The waiting room is outside, in the park.
4. Thanks to the cooperation of the Croatian Society for Preventive and Social Pediatrics and the UNICEF Office for Croatia, the first virtual conference, "Health care of children in the earthquake area of Sisak-Moslavina County", was held on March 23, 2021 (Photo No 6).